

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
 DUPONT LA PORTE - Removal Polrep
 Initial Removal Polrep



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 Region VI**

Subject: POLREP #1
 Initial Report
 DUPONT LA PORTE

LA PORTE, TX
 Latitude: 29.7025520 Longitude: -95.0378698

To: Anthony Buck, TCEQ
 Ronnie Crossland, USEPA
 Reggie Cheatham, USEPA

From: Jhana Enders, FOSC

Date: 11/15/2014

Reporting Period:

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority: CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead: PRP	Incident Category:	
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date: 11/15/2014	Start Date:	11/15/2014
Demob Date:	Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:	State Notification:	
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The DuPont LaPorte facility is located on 800 acres north of Highway 225, east of Houston, Texas. The property also includes four other tenant companies. Principal products manufactured at the DuPont LaPorte location include: PTMEG intermediates; Elvanol® polyvinyl alcohol resins; crop protection; and fluorochemicals.

1.1.2.1 Location

12501 Strang Road,
LaPorte, Texas

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Chemical release of Methyl Mercaptan resulting in four fatalities, one injury, and a shelter in place for the facility.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

At approximately 0330 hours on 15 November 2014, a valve failed in the Lannate Unit resulting in the release of Methyl Mercaptan, a chemical used in two insecticides that are manufactured at the facility. Officials at the facility confirmed the release and notified emergency responders, including Harris County Hazardous Materials Team (HAZMAT) and CIMA (Channel Industries Mutual Aid). The release was secured by 0600 hours. The National Response Center (NRC# 1101100) was notified at 0753 hours (EST). Upon notification by the NRC, EPA requested support from the US Coast Guard Sector Houston as a federal presence until the EPA FOSC could arrive.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

Upon arrival at the incident at 0917 hours, the EPA team began documenting site activities. An air monitoring team consisting of personnel from Harris County Pollution Control Services (HCPCS) was located west of the facility along Sens Road. According to HCPCS, Multi RAE readings were non-detect beyond the perimeter of the facility. Plant personnel along with members from the responding agencies conducted air monitoring utilizing draeger tubes inside the facility. Plant personnel stated readings were non-detect for methyl mercaptan. A command post was set up within sight of the unit and a unified command was established. While outside the command post, the EPA team conducted air monitoring utilizing a Multi RAE with a PID of 10.6 ev (electron volts). The ionization potential of methyl mercaptan is 9.44 ev. Air monitoring readings were non-detect for methyl mercaptan, LEL, CO or H2S.

An all-clear was given at 1006 hours and the shelter in place was lifted for plant personnel with the exception of the hot zone located in the Lannate Unit. Pressure readings of greater than 9 psi (pounds per square inch) inside the reactor and the presence of methyl mercaptan prevented emergency response personnel from entering the unit. Normal psi for the reactor is 1.5-2.0. Incident command continuously monitored the situation until a recovery plan was in place.

A shelter in place was reactivated as a safety precaution within the facility at approximately 1415 hours. At 1500 hours, plant personnel began venting the six valves located in the Lannate Unit in an effort to relieve the pressure within the lines. The valves were vented one at a time allowing the material to flow through the scrubber system and into the incinerator. Three valves were successfully vented and the pressure was reduced to 6.2 psi before issues involving a block in the system halted the process. Pressure inside the unit held at 6.2 psi and the shelter in place was lifted at approximately 1645 hours.

A recovery team consisting of emergency responders (one Dupont, four Harris County HAZMAT, two CIMA) made entry into the unit at 1739 hours. Entry personnel removed the four decedents from the hot zone by 1830 hours. After conducting decontamination, the decedent's remains were released to the Harris County Forensics Investigation team.

Plant personnel will monitor the unit overnight and vent product if the pressure within the reactor rises above 8.0 psi.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

The EPA team responded to the incident location and integrated into Unified Command.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

DuPont is the responsible party.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

2.2 Planning Section**2.2.1 Anticipated Activities****2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

The EPA team will attend the Operations Briefing at 1000 hours on 16 November 2014.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps**2.2.2 Issues****2.3 Logistics Section**

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities**3.1 Unified Command**

US EPA
 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
 CIMA (Channel Industries Mutual Aid)
 Harris County Hazardous Materials Team (HAZMAT)
 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

US Coast Guard Sector Houston
 Harris County Forensics Investigations
 Harris County Pollution Control Services

4. Personnel On Site

US EPA FOSC Jhana Enders and two EPA team members.

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.